



King County

K.C. Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

## CONSERVATION FUTURES (CFT) 2016 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS APPLICATION FOR FUNDS

**PROJECT NAME** Clark Lake Park Expansion

Applicant Jurisdiction(s): City of Kent Parks, Recreation, & Community Services

Open Space System: Clark Lake Watershed

*(Name of larger connected system, if any, such as Cedar River Greenway, Mountains to Sound, a Regional Trail, etc.)*

Acquisition Project Size: 2 parcels 15.5 acres (total)

*(Size in acres and proposed number of parcel(s) if a multi-parcel proposal)*

CFT Application Amount: \$2,000,000

*(Dollar amount of CFT grant requested)*

Type of Acquisition(s): ☒ Fee Title ☐ Conservation Easement ☐ Other:

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: Brian Levenhagen

Phone: 253-856-5116

Title: Park Planner

Fax: 253-856-6050

Address: 220 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S Kent, WA 98032

Email: bjlevenhagen@kentwa.gov

Date: March 13, 2015

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

*(In the space below, provide a brief but comprehensive description of the project. This should include the overall watershed, reach, trail or open space system if appropriate and specific targeted parcels and how they are significant individually and as part of an overall system.)*

The City of Kent is requesting \$2,000,000 to help with the acquisition of two parcels of land totaling fifteen and one half (15.5) acres of privately held property that is adjacent to and surrounded by the existing 125 acre passive use park, Clark Lake Park. The property is currently owned by a single individual who has, in the past, submitted an application to subdivide the property into nine or more single family lots. The property is mostly upland and is currently being used for grazing, while the northern property line extends into the lake. Of the seven acres that make up Clark Lake, three acres of the lake, in addition to two acres of adjacent wetlands and buffers, is owned by this property owner. The property is surrounded on three sides by the current Clark Lake Park property, which is considered a regional amenity for South King County.

The City sees the acquisition of this property as a high priority in order to preserve the integrity of the park and lake. This property, if developed, could drastically alter the character of Clark Lake Park. Residential development in Kent is experiencing a healthy post-recession rebound; at the same time, the community continues to place a high priority on acquisition of park and open space land. Clark Lake is envisioned as the eventual

“Central Park” of Kent, an oasis of open space in the midst of residential development. The site offers fantastic wildlife habitat and scenic views of the Cascade Range, Mt. Rainier and Clark Lake. Historically, the lake and its outfall were spawning grounds for Coho salmon.

## 1. OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

*Please review the attached evaluation criteria. For the proposed acquisition parcel(s), please mark those criteria that apply and thoroughly, yet succinctly, describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria. Please clearly describe how these criteria might be met at a landscape level, and how they apply to individual parcels. If restoration is part of the plan, please briefly describe the current condition and the hoped for restored condition that is the goal of the acquisition.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. Wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Historic/cultural resources                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. Salmon habitat and aquatic resources   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F. Urban passive-use natural area/greenbelt     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. Scenic resources                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> G. Park/open space or natural corridor addition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Community separator                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> H. Passive recreation opportunity/unmet needs   |

### Wildlife habitat / plants

The acquisition of these parcels will enhance the existing passive open space and wildlife habitat, located in center of a rapidly developing urban area. These parcels are critical to maintaining the function of the wildlife habitat system which contributes to the overall ecosystem of the Clark Lake watershed. Because of the proximity of these parcels to the lake, they will contribute to the important sources of food and habitat for a wide variety of mammal, reptile, bird, fish and amphibian species. The City is continuing its long-term commitment to remove invasive plant species and revegetate the site with native shrubs and trees. By doing this we will reduce unwanted human interaction into these critical habitat areas. At the same time this will minimize impacts from surrounding non-park activities and increase habitat opportunities for wildlife.

### Salmon habitat / aquatic resources

Of the fifteen and a half acres that make up this proposed acquisition, five acres are the waters of Clark Lake and adjacent shoreline, wetlands and buffers. Consequently, because of the partial ownership of the lake, the activities that occur on these parcels have a direct effect on Clark Lake, potentially creating detrimental effects on the watershed which are critical to the habitat and water quality of the lake and the outfall. The outfall of the lake is a tributary to Meridian Valley Creek, which flows into Soos Creek, and eventually into the Green River and is a major Coho Salmon habitat in South King County. With the City owning all of the property within the lake and surrounding the lake, we can better manage the water quality entering and exiting the lake, thereby supporting a vital wildlife ecosystem that is crucial in the regional efforts to improve salmon habitat. The City's Public Works Department and the Parks Department continue to work to improve habitat for salmon, both on and off the site.

### Scenic Views

This acquisition will protect the integrity of the park assemblage and will provide the public with an opportunity to view and be involved in a unique ecosystem seldom found in urban environments, as well as preserving a view corridor to Mount Rainier, the Cascade Range and Clark Lake. Plans for the park include a trail around the lake, picnic shelters, parking, open space, an ADA accessible education trail as well as interpretive signage throughout the park. This park will definitely be regarded as a destination within the City of Kent and much of South King County due to its natural quality, visual relief, large size and quiet character.

### Urban passive-use natural area / greenbelt & natural corridor addition

The City of Kent is the sixth largest city in the state. The fifteen and a half acres of property will greatly enhance the adjacent 125 acres of undeveloped, passive use Clark Lake Park and will provide greater access to Clark Lake and its adjoining natural land area. In the future we hope that 140 acre site will be used as a community passive use park as well as a regional open space for South King County. This parcel is located within the State's GMA area in King County. The City is committed to enhancing the park's natural character while making it an accessible natural area located in the middle a growing urban center.

### Park/open space addition

This property is located adjacent to and surrounded by the existing 125 acre Clark Lake Park, and is considered to be an integral part of the ecosystem surrounding the lake. These properties will expand existing wildlife corridors into and through the park. The acquisition will also allow the ability to have a loop trail system through the park and allow the City to maintain stewardship of the lake and its critical habitat that supports ecosystem vital to the Soo's Creek drainage basin. There are many active and neighborhood parks in Kent, but only two parks (Mill Creek and Lake Fenwick) that serve as the City's passive recreation, open space and wildlife habitat. With the deficit of passive recreation opportunities, the City feels it is critical to acquire these parcels and maintain the open space and the integrity of the lake in perpetuity.

### **Passive Recreation Opportunity/Unmet Needs**

Clark Lake Park is a very special amenity with opportunities to create, enhance and preserve critical passive recreation experiences for the residents of Kent and much of South King County. With this property, the City will be able to contribute to the passive recreation opportunities such as hiking, walking and other passive uses. The benefits of this property expansion with the existing park are immeasurable given the fact that there are no other similar opportunities in the City of Kent.

## **2. ADDITIONAL FACTORS**

*For the proposed acquisition parcel(s), please mark all criteria that apply and thoroughly, yet succinctly, describe in the space below how the proposed acquisition satisfies each marked criteria.*

- ☒ A. Educational/interpretive opportunity
- ☒ B. Threat of loss of open space resources
- ☒ C. Ownership complexity/willing seller(s)/ownership interest proposed
- ☒ D. Partnerships - Describe any public or private partnerships that will enhance this project
- ☒ E. Is the property identified in an adopted park, open space, comprehensive, or community plan?
- ☐ F. Transferable Development Credits (TDC) participation

### **Educational/Interpretive Opportunity**

This acquisition will help enable the City to expand our educational opportunities at Clark Lake Park. Nearby elementary, junior and senior high schools have been using this site for environmental education classes and they desire to continue and expand those opportunities. Martin Sortun Elementary is across the street to the south and Meridian Junior High is across SE 240 Street to the north and relies on Clark Lake solely for their environmental classes. City staff is currently looking for grant opportunities with teachers from Martin Sortun to improve educational opportunities at Clark Lake Park. Kent has partnered with Forterra in the Green Kent Partnership to train volunteers to help steward natural areas; Clark Lake is one of our most popular sites for volunteer events.

### **Threat of loss of open space resources**

The threat of losing these properties to development if not purchased by the City has been ongoing for years. Both of these parcels are critical to the overall master plan for Clark Lake as well as the ecosystem for the watershed. The loss of one or both of these parcels would greatly inhibit the City's ability to control the water quality of Clark Lake and could ruin the aesthetics of the park as a whole. Because of the relationship that these parcels have with the current park property the loss of them would severely constrain the benefits described in Section 1. As mentioned previously, the current owner has submitted plans to plat the property.

### **Willing Sellers**

Communication with the property owner has been ongoing for years. Recently the property owner approached the City to reopen negotiations. Those negotiations are on-going and the property owner has made it clear he is willing to sell to the City if terms can be agreed on.

### **Partnerships**

The City has partnered with Forterra to create the Green Kent Partnership to help steward natural areas. There is a Friends of Clark Lake citizens group that has been regularly meeting for over ten years who is very supportive of the city's efforts to complete the entire assemblage around Clark Lake. City of Kent also runs numerous volunteer events at Clark Lake Park with various community groups, service clubs, scouts, and churches.

### **Adopted park, open space, comprehensive or community plan**

The Parks Plan was adopted by City Council in 2010 and the acquisition of all properties surrounding Clark Lake is identified as a goal. Completing this assemblage has been a consistent goal for 25 years.

## **3. STEWARDSHIP AND MAINTENANCE**

*How will the property be stewarded and maintained? Does the property lend itself to volunteer stewardship opportunities? How will ongoing stewardship and maintenance efforts be funded?*

This property lends itself to many years of volunteer stewardship. As with many of these open spaces, invasive plants have taken over much of the area. The City will continue to utilize volunteers through the Green Kent Program for a large portion of the removal of invasive plants and the replanting of native shrubs and trees.

Every year, we typically receive numerous requests for Eagle Scout projects including fencing, wetland restoration and trail construction. The site lends itself to be a great opportunity for other volunteer groups to help in the City's effort to remove invasive plants and revegetate the site. Funding for any expenditure associated with the volunteer efforts will come from the CIP and/or general fund.

The city also has a Parks Maintenance Department consisting of 33 FTE plus seasonal staff and is regularly used in the day to day operation of parks and open spaces as well as any special projects that arise, funded out of the city's annual general fund budget. As a popular park located in the middle of a densely populated area, maintaining Clark Lake Park is a priority for Kent Parks Operations.

#### 4. PROJECT BUDGET

1) TOTAL CFT APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>a</sup>	CFT: 2,000,000
2) TOTAL PEL APPLICATION AMOUNT <sup>b</sup>	PEL:

<sup>a</sup>Allowable CFT acquisition costs (Ordinance 14714): The disbursement of funds shall be made only for capital project expenditures that include costs of acquiring real property, including interests in real property, and the following costs: the cost of related relocation of eligible occupants, cost of appraisal, cost of appraisal review, costs of title insurance, closing costs, pro rata real estate taxes, recording fees, compensating tax, hazardous waste substances reports, directly related staff costs and related legal and administrative costs, but shall not include the cost of preparing applications for conservation futures funds.

<sup>b</sup>King County projects only, if applicable.

#### Estimation of property value:

Briefly note how land values have been estimated (i.e., appraisal, property tax assessment, asking price, letter of value or other means).

PROJECT COSTS	ESTIMATED DOLLAR AMOUNT OR RANGE
Total property interest value	\$2.5 to \$4 Million Dollars
Title and appraisal work	\$10,000
Closing, fees, taxes	\$60,000
Relocation	\$50,000 (very rough estimate)
Hazardous waste reports	\$20,000
Directly related staff, administration and legal costs	\$30,000
<b>Total Project Costs (CFT and other funds)</b>	<b>\$2.6 to \$4.2 million dollars</b>

MATCHING FUNDS: Existing Sources (CFT can only provide a maximum of 50% of anticipated project costs)	DATE (Expended or Committed)	DOLLAR AMOUNT (Expended or Committed)
<b>Total CFT Funds Previously Received This Project</b>		
<b>Total Matching Funds and Past CFT Funds Currently Identified</b>		
<b>Unidentified Remaining Match Need</b>		<b>\$2,000,000</b>

**Unidentified remaining match need: What funds are anticipated and what is the time frame?**

*Please briefly discuss how the unidentified remaining match need above will be met.*

**Kent Staff plans to apply for an RCO grant for \$1,000,000 in 2016. The rest of the match will come from existing city resources.**

## **5. IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERSHIPS**

<b>Brief Activity Description</b>	<b>Dollar Value of In-kind Contribution</b>	<b>Status</b> (Completed or Proposed)	<b>Activity Date Range</b> (Completion Date or Proposed Completion Date)
<b>TOTAL</b>			

## **6. ATTACHED MAPS (*Two maps are now required: 1) site map and 2) general location map; you may also include one additional map, aerial photo or site photo*)**

8 ½ x 11" maps are preferred, but 11 x 17" is acceptable if folded and hole-punched for insertion into a three-ring binder.

**Site Map** that shows the following:

- Each parcel proposed for acquisition in yellow or distinct shading and an indication of any parcel proposed for less than fee simple acquisition, such as a conservation easement;
- Location of any proposed development to the site such as parking, trails or other facilities;
- Location of any proposed site restoration;
- Existing adjacent public (local, state or federal) parks or open spaces labeled and shown in dark green or distinct shading.

**Location Map** that shows the following:

- Other permanently protected open spaces (private, non profit, institutional, etc.) shown in light green or distinct shading;
- Major water courses such as creeks, rivers, lakes or wetlands;
- Major roads, arterial roads or regional trails.
- *Map scale: This map should show approximately a ten-mile radius around the proposed acquisition(s).*



# Clark Lake Park

- Current Application —
- Future Acquisition —
- Publicly Owned —
- Trails —
- Future Trail —

SE 240th St

Parking

Ruth  
2 parcels  
15.5 acres

SE 248th St





NOT TO SCALE

# Clark Lake Park - Ruth Property Acquisition

North Meridian Park

Soos Creek Trail

SE 240th St

Clark Lake Park

Morrill Meadows Park

Ruth Property

Lake Meridian

1 inch = 1,042 feet





